Hamilton County Emergency Management

Strategic Plan
2014-2017

Executive Summary

Hamilton County Emergency Management provides a concerted effort to reduce, prevent, and respond to all hazards within the county. Recent disasters have demonstrated that all levels of government along with private and public entities are required to work together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from any incident that occurs. Emergency Management functions as the lead coordinating agency during disasters by allocating resources to various departments and agencies. As Hamilton County continues to grow economically and physically, Emergency Management continuously evaluates plans and response capabilities to ensure the overall safety of the residents.

Emergency Management currently operates with three full time employees and one part time employee. The annual salary cost for the three full-time employees is $157, 973.Currently, 50% of the annual salary and 50% of the benefit cost for the full time positions are subsidized by the US Department of Homeland Security through the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. The current part time position is funded by the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant which amounts to $23,283. Overall, the 2014 budget for operating Emergency Management is $193,465.

Emergency Management continues to focus on mitigation, planning, response and recovery from incidents that occur throughout the county. As a result, Emergency Management has a responsibility to coordinate with agencies during severe weather outbreaks. Amateur radio operators and public safety personnel from local jurisdictions utilize the trained storm spotters to provide early warning to residents of Hamilton County. Emergency Management is responsible for over twenty amateur radio operator volunteers who assist by providing communication support and secure instant messaging during disasters. In addition to providing communication support, Emergency Management provides assistance to all county agencies to become and remain National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant. NIMS compliancy is mandated in order to be eligible for federal grants. Currently, Emergency Management provides homeland security grant assistance to all eligible agencies and maintains all of the data on these grants through the Indiana Grants Management System. To remain in a culture of preparedness, Emergency Management assists in the planning process of annual exercises that tests the response capabilities of numerous public safety agencies throughout the county. By conducting exercises, Emergency Management continues to develop working relationships with all public safety, public works, health and medical departments in Hamilton County. The purpose of the strategic plan is to establish tangible goals and objectives that will not only benefit the community but reflect Emergency Management's mission and vision statement.

Mission

Emergency Management coordinates the public, private, and non-profit sectors for the citizens of Hamilton County by mitigating against, preparing for, responding to and recovering from natural and man-made disasters and emergencies.

Vision

A whole community approach to a safer, less vulnerable and more resilient Hamilton County

Strategic Plan Target Areas

Community Outreach
Organizational Readiness
All-Hazards Planning
Training and Exercises
EOC/IMT Collaboration
Grants Management

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Hamilton County Emergency Management takes pride in the growing dedication and communication between our organization and other public safety agencies. Over the past few years, Emergency Management has not only gained support from the local government but also citizens through the increase in volunteers. Furthermore, Emergency Management provides real time information to residents through the use of social media. These sites serve to better prepare citizens before, during, and after an emergency or disaster has occurred. The following list identifies Emergency Management's strengths:

- Trained and experienced personnel
- Understanding of the four phases of emergency management
- Public safety/ interagency coordination and relationships
- Increased support from the local government
- The emerging volunteer involvement
- Dedication
- Communication with Local Emergency Planning Committee
- Bridging Health Emergency Management and Emergency Management gap
- Access to a bounty of resources
- Emergency Operations Center Participation
- Social Media

Weaknesses

As Hamilton County continues to evolve, Emergency Management must identify best practices to encompass the "whole community" approach. As a result, Emergency Management has identified a list of current weaknesses within the organization. These weaknesses include relationships with non-profits, religious groups, as well as Emergency Operations Center (EOC) representatives. In addition, Emergency Management must codify the roles and responsibilities of staff members to eliminate confusion when coordinating with other public safety agencies. Through the goals and objectives of this plan, Emergency Management hopes to bridge these gaps and shortfalls. The following list identifies Emergency Management's weaknesses:

- Relationships with Non-Profits
- Coordination/Relationships/Engagement with religious organizations of all denominations
- EM Staff wear too many hats due to tasks, expectations, disasters, and meetings

- Growth of Local Emergency Planning Committee
- Grants Management
- Volunteers Management
- Continued growth of partner agencies within the Emergency Operations Center
- Codification of the roles and responsibilities of Emergency Management
- Identification and ability to utilize county staff for Emergency Operations Center activations
- Continuity of Operations

Opportunities

Hamilton County Emergency Management sets a high expectation to overcome our weaknesses and transform opportunities into strengths. Therefore, Emergency Management hopes to enhance our relationships with all sectors through education and training. In addition, Emergency Management will focus on capability based planning to better allocate resources to aid public safety agencies. The following list identifies Emergency Management's opportunities:

- Capabilities Based Planning vs. Grant Based Planning
- Educating Stakeholders
- Enhancing relationships with public, private, and non-profit sectors
- Local Emergency Planning Committee evolution of organizations
- Emergency Operations Center resource management
- Continue to enhance Capability based planning through relationships/ coordination
- Developing capabilities
- Ordinances: growth, snow emergencies, pay
- Special event support and resources
- Typing Hazard Vulnerability Analysis justification
- Social Media

Threats

Hamilton County is the fastest growing county in the state. Therefore Emergency Management's preparedness efforts must advance to reflect the All-Hazards approach. Whether natural or man-made, Emergency Management must identify potential threats to the county. The following list identifies Emergency Management's threats:

- Grant funding
- Severe weather: Vulnerability of Infrastructure
- Perceptions and Expectations
- Simultaneous large planned events
- Man-made events
- Lack of large scale events to test the full capability of Emergency Operations Center
- Social Media Perceptions of Organization: providing timely and accurate public information

Goal 1

Engage the public, private, non-profit, and citizen community in emergency management

Hamilton County Emergency Management will strengthen its relationships with all sectors through planning and preparedness efforts. Specifically, through outreach programs, Emergency Management can provide the necessary tools to arm citizens, businesses, and non-profits to prepare for, respond to, and recover from incidents. By collaborating with all sectors, Hamilton County can maintain a culture of resilience.

Objective 1.1: By 2017 engage all non-profit organizations who aid residents in the Non-Profit Preparedness Program.

Objective 1.1.1: Facilitate the ability of non-profit organizations to attend one workshop and one seminar to discuss business continuity and emergency procedures.

Objective 1.1: Conduct home preparedness campaigns by the second quarter of 2015.

Objective 1.2: Offer two workshops and one seminar per year to effectively engage each sector.

Objective 1.3: Establish private sector workgroup to identify resources prior to a disaster.

Objective 1.4: Partner with schools to provide guidance and advice on emergency preparedness.

Objective 1.5: Improve the use of social media for marketing and notifying residents.

Goal 2

Transform Hamilton County Emergency Management's Organizational Readiness

Hamilton County Emergency Management will maintain a high level of organizational readiness to respond to any and all incidents, whether natural or man-made, that occur within the county. Emergency Management hopes to improve their readiness through increased staffing and improved partnerships.

Objective 2.1: Review and examine opportunities for additional staff to meet the demand of planning for Hamilton County. Specifically create a position justification and with proper support move towards requesting funding to add a position in 2015.

Objective 2.2: Establish a framework to engage an effective Citizens Corps.

Objective 2.3: Effectively create synergy between county and municipal agencies active in a disaster.

Objective 2.4: Continue educating Hamilton County Emergency Management staff through training and Incident Command System courses.

Goal 3

Lead an integrated approach to All-Hazards planning

Hamilton County Emergency Management will follow the All-Hazards approach, which in turn, increases the organizational readiness by being prepared for any and all incidents.

Objective 3.1: Compile a list of resources from all respective support functions.

Objective 3.1.1: Create a sustainability plan to update resources by 2016.

Objective 3.2: Through the examination of the UASI workgroup, complete a Threat Hazard Incident Risk Analysis (THIRA) by the fourth quarter of 2014.

Objective 3.3: Identify a framework to aid support function representatives, which will be updated every six months by fourth quarter 2015.

Objective 3.3.1: Engage support functions through formally organized meetings by the second quarter of 2015.

Objective 3.5: Complete a full update of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) plan by the fourth quarter of 2014.

Objective 3.6: Effectively establish a life cycle and replacement process of Emergency Management's resources by the fourth quarter of 2015.

Objective 3.7: Effectively establish a focus on planning as it relates to Cyber Security both internally, throughout County Government, and externally with citizens of Hamilton County.

Goal 4

Strengthen the county by conducting training and exercises to test the capabilities of all public safety agencies

Training and exercises are crucial to identifying gaps and shortfalls in the response phase. Therefore, through frequent exercises, Emergency Management will be able to maintain a working relationship with key players to test the county's response capabilities.

Objective 4.1: Establish an effective Training Exercise Planning Workshop for agencies in Hamilton County.

Objective 4.1.1: Initial meeting in the second quarter of 2014.

Objective 4.1.2: Short- term goal 2015-2016.

Objective 4.1.3: Long-term goal 2016-2017.

Objective 4.2: Facilitate county government National Incident Management System implementation by seeking support from appropriate county agencies.

Objective 4.4: Conduct a county wide functional exercise.

Goal 5

Effectively collaborate and coordinate with Incident Management Teams and the Emergency Operations Center

One of Emergency Management's primary goals is to successfully coordinate and collaborate with both first responders and support functions. To do so effectively, it is necessary to train and educate these individuals.

Objective 5.1: Effectively educate prospective support functions on what the EOC is, why we have it, and why we use it by the fourth quarter of 2014.

Objective 5.2: Create a formalized list that identifies triggers in which the EOC will activate.

Objective 5.3: Move HCEM entirely to Web EOC by August 31, 2014

Goal 6

Maintain the management of grant funds with sustainability

Emergency Management heavily relies on grant funding. Therefore, it is vital to manage the funds in order to provide and support other local agencies.

Objective 6.1: Identify additional funding opportunities in the first quarter of 2015

Objective 6.2: Move from grants based management to capabilities based planning

Conclusion

As Hamilton County continues to grow economically and physically, Emergency Management's preparedness and response efforts will continue to evolve and expand to ensure the overall safety of the our residents. Hamilton County Emergency Management's Strategic Plan provides a framework to enhance the mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts though-out the county. This plan will serve as a tool to implement programs which reflect the goals and objectives stated in the document. By utilizing this plan, Emergency Management can coordinate and collaborate with all sectors to create a better prepared and more resilient community. In addition, the Strategic Plan will be evaluated on an annual basis to ensure the goals and objectives are being met. Likewise, Emergency Management will fully reassess the plan in 2016-2017.